

AN EXAMINATION OF  
THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION  
IN NONELECTIVE GOVERNMENT  
AS SEEN IN THREE MODELS OF POLITICAL LINKAGE

by

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## I. Introduction

The United States' system of representative government results from the conviction that "...the people are the only legitimate fountain of power" (Federalist 49). This fundamental premise has led to the use of a variety of devices to allow citizens to influence government. Voting rights, the most basic of these mechanisms, are established in the Constitution (Article 1, Section 2). Other means of citizen input, while not constitutionally guaranteed, have developed in recent years as American government has expanded. This research project examines these secondary methods of participation, in which the citizen attempts to influence government outside the role of elector.

Nonelective means of citizen participation have been established both within and outside government. Some mechanisms for participation resemble voting rights by virtue of having been institutionalized within government. Among these devices are advisory boards, government decentralization, and official intermediaries (Moynihan, 1969; Jones, 1981; Crosby et al., 1986). Other methods of citizen participation have been initiated independently of the official structure of government. Such methods include the efforts of individual citizens and of pressure groups to persuade government to act in their interests (Mladenka, 1977; Greene, 1982; Rosener, 1982). Whether such contacts are initiated inside or outside the structure of government, they play

an important role in allowing citizens access to nonelected and elected officials.

In Public Opinion and Public Policy (1981), Norman R. Luttbeg organizes accord between citizens and government into five models of political linkage. Three of the five models, which Luttbeg terms "coercive", require contact between citizens and public officials. These three models can be used to categorize the various modes of citizen participation which have evolved in the United States.

In the rational-activist model, individual citizens are expected to be politically informed and involved so that they can express approval or disapproval of the performances of public officials. Likewise, officials are motivated to evaluate public opinion and seek public approval of their policy establishment and implementation. Both citizens and public officials are expected to maintain accurate communications and make rational choices.

The political parties model carries many of the same expectations as the rational-activist model, but adds an intermediate institution between the public and the government to facilitate political linkage. In the case of elective office, Luttbeg designates the political party as the intermediate institution. The party simplifies decision making by allowing voters to choose a slate of candidates rather than selecting each candidate individually. Within government, the party helps implement public opinion by seeing that its members adhere to the party platform.

Like the political parties model, the pressure group model designates an intermediate institution to link citizens and government. Pressure groups represent individuals who share opinions on government policy. Because pressure groups reduce the number of citizens that public officials must deal with, it becomes easier to weigh public opinion when establishing policy. As Luttbeg points out, however, groups may exercise pressure which is disproportionate to their size.

It can be shown that Luttbeg's three coercive models of political linkage are applicable to nonelective agencies as well as to elective bodies. All three models can be shown to be relevant to citizen participation in government agencies. The rational-activist and pressure group models represent, respectively, situations in which citizens contact public officials directly or use the mechanism of the pressure group as a means of facilitating contact. The political parties model resembles the pressure groups model in its inclusion of a mechanism which accommodates citizen contact. However, the mechanism in the political parties model originates within government rather than outside it. In the same way that political parties link voters and representatives, institutional devices within agencies are used to link citizens and agency officials.

All three of Luttbeg's coercive models of political linkage contain the assumption that public opinion has an impact on public policy. As a result, these models provide a useful context for examining citizen interaction with officials who hold nonelective

public office. This paper employs the three models as a framework for examining citizen participation in public agencies.

## II. Literature

A considerable body of literature has been devoted to the subject of citizen participation in government. The literature offers a variety of perspectives on citizen participation, many of which are relevant to Luttbeg's three models of political linkage. Some research is applicable to all three models because it examines the nature of participation and the nature of responsiveness as they occur throughout the various forms of citizen participation. Consequently, such research provides a useful background for examining Luttbeg's models.

In a more specific vein, research which lends itself to the rational-activist model examines the consequences of direct interactions between citizens and government. Other research pertains to the political parties model because it focuses on structures institutionalized within government to facilitate citizen involvement. In addition, a great deal of research is applicable to the pressure groups model due to its examination of different types of interest groups. All of this literature can be used to examine citizen participation's effect on the functioning of government agencies.

Some research on the nature of participation focuses on citizens' motives for involvement. McSwain (1985) suggests that the nature of citizen participation in the United States is determined by the liberalist heritage of the American Constitution, which emphasizes individualism rather than the well-being of the entire society. As a result, individuals organize out of self-interest instead of organizing for the good of the whole.

A study by Steinberger (1984) explores a similar question by examining the effect of communality on participation in local politics. Defining communality as an individual's attachment to his locality, Steinberger concludes that merely living in a given location is not a reliable predictor of participation in local politics. However, highly educated individuals are more likely to participate on the basis of locality alone than are individuals with low levels of education.

Another aspect of participation is examined by Steinman (1976), whose research deals with the failure of low-income and minority individuals to participate in administrative processes. It is found that although such individuals profess interest in participation, they also need concrete and immediate results. Since most forms of citizen participation are oriented toward achieving long-term goals, socially disadvantaged people are discouraged from participating. Their motivations for participation are at odds with the available methods of wielding influence.

Steinman's study can also serve as an illustration of how environmental factors influence participation. As he shows, poverty affects an individual's ability to participate in government. In a similar vein, Kafoglis (1970) addresses the question of social differences in participation in her examination of the costs and benefits of participation. Kafoglis' essay points out that for poor people, the costs of time and effort are much greater than for the middle class and the wealthy. Kafoglis concludes that some people's participation should be subsidized to offset their lack of personal gain.

Another environmental influence on participation may be found in community structure. Cohen (1979) presents five stages of neighborhood political development, ranging from "disorganized" to "mass communal". The study concludes that the degree of organization affects the neighborhood's ability to participate in planning. However, research by Bridgeland and Sofranko (1975) draws a different conclusion. Their study of several Illinois communities found no correlation between community structure and community mobilization.

While these authors examine the nature of participation, others investigate the nature of government's responsiveness to citizens. Sharp (1981) raises the question of whether responsiveness to citizen demands should take precedence over the professional administrator's ability to discern the needs of the public. The literature on responsiveness deals primarily with these two administrative roles.



Some research concludes that public officials try to maintain a distance from citizen contacts. A survey by Greene (1982) found that municipal administrators prefer not to deal with the public if they can avoid it. This attitude is attributed to the administrators' perception of themselves as professional rather than political. Similarly, Aberbach and Rockman (1978) found that federal executives' concerns about inefficiency and demagoguery caused them to have reservations about citizen participation. However, the executives generally tended to be sympathetic to the idea of public involvement in government.

Other studies indicate that some administrators not only sympathize with the public, but actively promote citizens' objectives. Cupps (1977) contends that administrators may change or maintain policies to please citizens without assessing the long-term consequences. Likewise, White (1969) presents a case study of a "dialectical" organization, in which clients are not subordinate to the organization and goal achievement is stressed over organizational self-preservation.

The concepts of participation and responsiveness are applicable to all three of Luttbeg's models of political linkage. The simplest form of participation and responsiveness can be found in the rational-activist model, in which contact between citizens and officials takes place without the benefit of representatives or institutionalized mechanisms for participation. The literature shows that direct contact, as defined in Luttbeg's rational-activist model, has varied implications.

Some research presents evidence of communication problems between citizens and public officials. Milbrath (1981), in a survey of citizen opinion, found that officials inaccurately predicted what public opinion would be. Conversely, citizens may not understand the administrator's point of view. Orr (1979) suggests that the public cannot comprehend some of the complex issues with which government deals. Such misinterpretations on either side could detract from the effectiveness of direct citizen contact.

Other research indicates that public officials sometimes manipulate citizen contacts. Lipsky (1968) lists ways in which leaders may defuse the demands of citizen protesters. These methods include granting token and symbolic satisfactions, postponing action, discrediting protestors, and appearing to have limited ability to grant goals.

Some research does suggest that citizens can sometimes affect government decisions through direct contact with officials. Rosener (1982) finds a significant relationship between state commissioners' decisions and public opinion. Similarly, Pierce (1979) concludes that water managers concur with the public in many aspects of water policy. Other researchers (Onibokum and Curry, 1976) found that citizen participants felt that their views had been incorporated into government planning. As can be seen, the literature does offer some support for the rational-activist model of political linkage.

Much of the literature on citizen participation deals with mechanisms which have been institutionalized within government to facilitate citizen input. Instead of relying on citizens to initiate interaction with public officials, the agency's structure is modified in a way which allows citizens easier access to government. The literature can be divided into three general areas of research: government decentralization, government intermediaries between citizens and officials, and citizen advisory boards.

Some of the earlier literature on citizen participation documents the emphasis in the 1960s on government decentralization. Much of the research is directed at the Community Action Programs which were established in the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Moynihan, 1969). At the time, some researchers predicted that the trend toward citizen involvement in local agencies would produce both increased pressure for change and stronger local government (Miller and Rein, 1969; Kaufman, 1969). However, other research took a less sanguine view of decentralization. The concept of maximum feasible participation was seen by many researchers as poorly planned and implemented, and only sporadically effective (Moynihan, 1969; Theodore and Theodore, 1972; Mithun, 1975).

Direct citizen involvement in agency functioning gave way to other institutional mechanisms for participation. One area discussed in the literature is the use of government officials as intermediaries between citizens and public agencies.

Intermediaries may be elected officials (Jones, 1981; Greene, 1982) or appointed (Gormley, 1981; Hill, 1982). Another type of mechanism is the use of material resources to support citizen participation. Such resources include financial and technical assistance (Paglin and Shor, 1977) and computerized methods of assessing public opinion (Rohrbaugh and Weir, 1978). In all cases, government structure is altered to accommodate citizen input.

Another government mechanism for facilitating citizen participation is the use of citizen advisory boards. Much of the research evaluates the degree of input that advisory boards have in agency decisions. Some researchers (Browne and Rehfuss, 1975; Kauffman, 1977; Steger, 1984) find evidence of effectiveness, while others (Paap, 1982; Plumlee, 1985; Lauria, 1986) conclude that such boards have little effect on agency decisions.

Citizen participation can also be facilitated by organizations outside the government. The literature discusses these organizations in its examination of pressure groups. Researchers have studied how pressure groups function internally, as well as how they interact externally with bureaucracies.

Research which deals with the internal workings of pressure groups often addresses the question of organizational maintenance. Some researchers (Browne, 1976; Prestby and Wandersman, 1985) conclude that goal attainment helps assure a pressure group's survival. In contrast, Piven and Cloward (1979) argue that one reason the welfare rights movement of the 1960s

expired was because it did meet its goals, thus eliminating its members' need to belong to a pressure group. A related issue concerns the accuracy with which pressure groups represent their members' views. Salisbury (1984) concludes that pressure group activity is dominated by institutional interests, rather than the interests of individual members. However, another study (Franke and Dobson, 1985) contends that the homogeneity within pressure groups enables them to represent their members' views accurately in any case.

Research on the interaction of pressure groups and agencies covers a wide range of issues. Schlozman (1984) examines whether the recent proliferation of pressure groups has created equality of representation. Schuck (1977) explores the degree of influence that public interest groups have on policy. A study by Ventriss and Pecorella (1984) questions whether citizen-oriented groups run the risk of becoming "bureaucratized" in their efforts to influence government, with a consequent diminishing of their original purpose.

As can be seen, the literature on citizen participation in government discusses a wide variety of issues from numerous perspectives. Research has been conducted on pressure groups organized outside of agencies, government-designed arrangements which exist within agencies, and citizen-initiated contacts which are independent of any organization. This body of literature lends itself well to an examination of Luttbeg's three models of political linkage.

### III. Problem statement

This paper tests the hypothesis that citizen participation is effective in dealing with nonelected public officials. The investigation employs Luttbeg's three coercive models of political linkage as a framework for data analysis. The rational-activist model, the political parties model, and the pressure groups model encompass a wide spectrum of methods by which citizens may theoretically influence government. Thus, Luttbeg's models are appropriate for examining a subject as diverse as citizen participation.

The three models are studied individually to determine their legitimacy as forms of political linkage. On the basis of data collected during research, arguments for and against the validity of each model are constructed. Conclusions are then drawn regarding the effectiveness of citizen participation as seen within each model.

Examining citizen participation within the individual models of political linkage makes it possible to determine whether different forms of participation are equally effective. Based on the degree of effectiveness found in each model, conclusions are reached regarding the overall effectiveness of citizen participation. The implications of these results are then considered.

#### IV. Methodology

The question of citizen participation includes a wide scope of issues and approaches. Because of the breadth of the subject, library research was chosen as the most appropriate methodology for testing the hypothesis that citizen participation is effective in dealing with nonelective government agencies. Use of the literature as a data source makes it possible to study many different aspects of the subject. Citizen participation is examined as it occurs on the local, state, and federal levels of government, and in a variety of different agencies. In addition, the literature allows citizen participation to be analyzed from the perspectives of both citizens and government officials. Another advantage in the use of a literature survey is found in the diverse methodologies which the researchers employ. The use of multiple research methods may increase the validity of the survey's results. Finally, an examination of the literature provides an understanding of the development of citizen participation over the last twenty years.

Because literature was used as a data source, it was necessary to consider whether the researchers' methodologies affected the outcomes of their studies. It seemed possible that different research methods would lead to different conclusions as to the effectiveness of citizen participation. To determine

whether methodology affected results, the articles used in the survey were categorized according to research method. The three categories of methodology used were anecdote, survey, and observation/participation. The articles' conclusions were then analyzed.

It was found that the anecdotal approach yielded more positive conclusions regarding citizen participation's effectiveness than did the other methodologies. Sixty-seven percent of anecdotal articles concluded that citizen participation is effective, while 13% drew negative conclusions and 20% did not arrive at a conclusion. In contrast, surveys and observation/participation respectively yielded 47% and 54% positive results, 37% and 34% negative results, and 16% and 11% inconclusive results. These two methodologies did not appear to differ significantly from each other in their results.

A possible explanation for the anecdotes' high rate of positive conclusions may be found in the subject matter and perspective of the methodology. Many authors who use the anecdotal method are describing or defining a specific way of influencing government through citizen participation (e.g. Irland, 1975; Berry, 1981). This approach assumes that citizen participation is effective. Without this assumption, the validity of the researcher's views would be in question. In contrast, the empirical methods of survey and observation tend not to use citizen participation's effectiveness as a given. Examples can be found in Austin's 1972 survey and in Lauria's 1986 case study.



This paper takes into account the difference between anecdotal and other methodologies. Anecdotal articles which assume the effectiveness of citizen participation may be used as a starting point for analysis, but are not presented as evidence of effectiveness. However, anecdotes which do not rely on a presumption of effectiveness are applied equally with the empirical methodologies to prove or disprove the hypothesis. This approach is used to argue for or against the effectiveness of citizen participation in all three models of political linkage.

Having established the literature on citizen participation as the data source, a system for the computation of effectiveness was devised. The system includes two definitions of effective citizen participation, and a set of criteria which are used to determine whether the data meet either of the definitions. Within the analysis of each model of political linkage, the two definitions of effectiveness are assigned different degrees of emphasis. Using this system, the hypothesis is tested within each of the three models of political linkage.

Effective citizen participation in nonelective government has two possible definitions. One definition interprets effectiveness as the achievement of access to nonelective government. To determine whether the data meet this definition, it is asked whether it is possible for citizens to communicate with public agencies, and how easily the contact can be undertaken. If it is found that citizens are able to contact agencies with relative

ease, then citizens are said to have access to nonelective government.

Effective citizen participation can also be defined as the achievement of the participants' goals. This definition goes beyond obtaining access to agencies to emphasize results. To ascertain how well participation attains its desired results, two issues are explored. First, it is asked whether administrators incorporate citizen input into agency decisionmaking. If officials are found to take the public's ideas into consideration, then the first step toward goal achievement is said to have been taken. Second, it is determined whether there is material evidence that citizen input has influenced government decisions. If agency decision making reflects citizen input to a significant extent, citizens may be said to have achieved the desired results.

In the rational-activist model, obtaining access to government is used as the primary definition of effectiveness. Because contact between agencies and individual citizens is unstructured and difficult to maintain, achieving such communication is seen as evidence of effective participation. Less emphasis is placed on achieving results, since independent citizens are assumed to wield relatively little influence over public officials.

The importance of each definition is reversed in the political parties model. Because government is structured to facilitate citizen participation, access is assumed to exist. Consequently, achieving access to agencies is not considered the

primary definition of effective participation. Government in this model encourages participation, leading to the assumption that citizens would have a reasonable chance of achieving results. Thus, greater emphasis is given to goal achievement as a definition of effectiveness.

The pressure groups model calls for greater equality between the two definitions. More emphasis is placed on gaining access to agencies than in the political parties model, since pressure groups do not necessarily have access to governmental participatory mechanisms. Similarly, goal achievement is stressed more than in the rational-activist model because organized interests are assumed to have more influence in government than do individual citizens. In the analysis of the pressure groups model, then, the definition of effectiveness places equal emphasis on gaining access to government and on achieving results.

Using these definitions, the effectiveness of citizen participation is examined within each of the three models of political linkage. This analysis is intended to lead to confirmation or rejection of the hypothesis that citizen participation is effective in its interaction with government agencies.

## V. Findings

### A. Rational-activist model

In the rational-activist model, government and the individual citizen interact independent of mechanisms which are designed to facilitate participation. This model represents citizen participation in its most basic form. For this reason, it is the first model for which findings are presented that support or refute the effectiveness of citizen participation. The analysis uses access as the primary criterion for determining effectiveness, while goal achievement is accorded less emphasis.

The argument for the effectiveness of rational-activist participation begins with evidence that citizens can gain access relatively easily to nonelected public officials. Two studies of municipal government contend that individuals do have this degree of access. Mladenka (1977) studied citizen-initiated contacts with Houston officials. He found that 537 such contacts occurred over a one-year period, indicating that citizens have some knowledge of how to communicate with local government. A study by Vedlitz et al. (1980) deals with citizen contacts in Houston and in Dallas. Vedlitz' study of city tracts tested a model which predicted that there would be a correlation between economic well-being and contacts with government. It was found that as the economic status of the tracts decreased, the number of contacts actually increased. This conclusion contradicts the idea

(Kafoglis, 1970) that poverty decreases the ability to participate in government. Vedlitz attributes his results to Dallas' and Houston's centralized contact system. In these cases, there is evidence that citizens can gain access to city agencies without undue problems.

If citizens have access to government, they have the potential to achieve their goals. The first component of goal achievement involves the extent to which government officials incorporate citizen input into decisionmaking. Some of the anecdotal literature suggests that officials give too much consideration to public opinion. Cupps (1977) contends that administrators' attempts to please citizens may prevent them from considering the long-term consequences of their decisions. Similarly, Orr (1979) suggests that participatory democracy may lead to "inefficiency and chaos" due to the public's lack of expertise in technical areas. While these authors present a negative view of rational-activist participation, they do suggest that citizens' viewpoints are included in administrative decision making.

A study by Rosener (1982) offers empirical support for these contentions. Her examination of 1,816 public hearings of the California Costal Commission found that denial of development project permits increased when citizens expressed opposition. The increase in denials occurred even when professional staff recommended permit approval. In this instance, citizen opinion appeared to be given consideration along with other factors.

Rosener's study also serves as evidence that rational-activist participation can achieve the material results wanted by citizens. The denial of publicly opposed permits indicates that the citizen goal of blocking development projects was met. Public influence on policy is also illustrated in a study by Schumaker (1975). In this survey of local governments' responsiveness to protestors' demands, it was found that social support for the protestors' claims increased the level of responsiveness. There is some evidence, then, that individual citizens can achieve concrete results in their interactions with administrators.

Although there are indications that the rational-activist form of citizen participation can be effective, it is also possible to construct an argument against the effectiveness of this type of political linkage. Some of the research implies that individual citizens experience difficulty in gaining access to government agencies and in achieving results.

The establishment of contact between citizens and public officials can be impeded by both social and governmental factors. For citizens, economic circumstances can interfere with the ability to participate in government. Kafoglis (1970) theorizes that poor people sacrifice more in time and effort when they participate than do more affluent individuals. Steinman (1976) substantiates this view in his survey of low-income Mexican-Americans. The author concludes that these citizens want concrete and immediate results, while conventional forms of participation require a long-term perspective. Consequently, some citizens are

deterred from participating because of their expectations and their economic standing.

Conditions within government agencies can also discourage citizen participation. A survey by Greene (1982) demonstrates how administrators' attitudes may prevent the public from interacting with government. It was found that while municipal administrators would rather deal with citizens than elected officials, their first preference is to avoid contact with both. Administrators did not appear to be receptive to citizen-initiated contacts. Such an attitude could well prove detrimental to citizen participation.

Citizens who do achieve contact with government officials may find that their views are not included in agency decisionmaking. Like the inability to contact officials, lack of input impedes citizens' ability to achieve results. Administrators' disregard of citizen opinion may result from factors outside and inside government.

Agency officials may not include citizens' views in decision making because the public lacks the knowledge needed to contribute useful information. Gormley (1981), in a study of public representation in regulatory agency proceedings, found that direct citizen participation was ineffective due to citizens' lack of expertise. This deficiency was found to detract from the quality of representation. A study by Cooper (1980) confirms that the need for technical knowledge can impede citizen participation. Cooper's examination of a Los Angeles neighborhood group revealed

that in order for the group to deal with government agencies, it had to undertake various technical activities. Professional staff with technical expertise eventually replaced the original community members. As a result, community input became a secondary consideration.

Another factor which may exclude citizen opinions from administrative decisionmaking is officials' attitudes toward citizen participation. For example, Aberbach and Rockman's 1978 survey of federal executives found that most administrators were sympathetic to the concept of citizen participation but still harbored reservations. These reservations were based on fear of demagoguery and inefficiency, and on citizens' lack of accountability and technical expertise. While these executives do not appear to object to citizens contacting agencies, they also see drawbacks in participation which could cause them to limit citizen input in decisionmaking.

Other administrators may simply assume that citizen input is unnecessary. Milbrath (1981), in a survey of citizens and officials regarding a water quality plan, found that officials inaccurately predicted public opinion on the subject. It was concluded that officials felt compelled to justify their own opinions, and consequently were unlikely to change their outlook to conform to citizens' views. The researcher suggests that as a result of this attitude, citizen input would be rejected.



As can be seen, failure to have input into government decision making may detract from the effectiveness of the rational-activist mode of participation. Even if individual citizens do succeed in making their views known to administrators, they may not achieve desired results. Mladenka's 1977 study, which was cited earlier as evidence of citizens' ability to contact government, illustrates this situation. Citizens who asked the Houston city government for service received a satisfactory response in 37.4% of contacts; 62.6% of citizen contacts received no response at all. The researcher concluded that contacts which required high effort on the government's part got a low response, while requests which called for low effort received a high response rate. In this case, responsiveness to citizen contacts takes place on the government's terms.

Another example of citizens' inability to influence government is found in Vedlitz and Dyer's 1984 study of citizen requests to Dallas city government. To determine why bureaucracy responds as it does to citizen requests, the researchers tested three models of responsiveness. It was concluded that citizens' political stance and social class did not influence responsiveness, while "technical management criteria" did affect government response. The results of this study suggest that public officials make decisions independent of citizen influence.

When the evidence is summarized, the effectiveness of the rational-activist forms of citizen participation is called into doubt. The research indicates that several factors prevent

citizens from influencing government in this type of political linkage. The most important impediments to effectiveness appear to be public officials' attitudes toward citizen participation, and citizens' lack of specialized knowledge.

Administrators' degree of receptivity to citizen participation affects citizens' access to government and goal achievement. As was seen in Greene's survey, administrators can prevent citizens from establishing contact with government due to an unwillingness to deal with the public. If citizens do succeed in contacting agency officials, their opinions and requests may be discounted. Milbrath's and Mladenka's studies show that officials can be unwilling to expend the effort needed to respond to citizen complaints or become acquainted with citizen opinions. When administrators' attitudes prevent citizens from influencing government, citizens are unable to achieve concrete results.

One explanation for officials' reluctance to allow citizen participation in agencies may be found in citizens' perceived lack of technical expertise. Gormley's survey of public utility commissioners suggests that administrators find little of value in individual citizens' opinions. Cooper's case study confirms this viewpoint in its depiction of a neighborhood group which had to hire professional staff to influence government. It appears that citizen participation is unlikely to be effective unless citizens can interact with government on a professional basis.

Some research does suggest that the rational-activist type of citizen participation is potentially effective in dealing with government. Vedlitz et al. found that social class had no impact on citizens' amount of contact with government, and Rosener's study of the California Costal Commission offers numerical evidence that citizen opinion can affect officials' decisions. However, the argument against the effectiveness of individual citizens' interaction with government appears stronger than the evidence in favor of effectiveness. Although contact with officials may take place, the research indicates that administrators often disregard citizen input and thus prevent citizens from participating in government decisionmaking. For this reason, it appears that the rational-activist model of political linkage does not represent an effective means of citizen participation.

#### B. Political parties model

Luttbeg's political parties model of political linkage shows the political party acting as an intermediary between citizens and elected officials. This arrangement is paralleled in nonelective government when agencies institutionalize mechanisms to facilitate citizen participation. Such mechanisms include government decentralization, government-appointed intermediaries, and citizen advisory boards. These three participatory mechanisms are examined here for evidence of their effectiveness in promoting

citizen participation. Since government encourages participation in the political parties model, gaining access to agencies is given secondary consideration in the analysis. Instead, goal achievement is used as the primary criterion in determining effectiveness.

Much of the earlier research on institutional participatory mechanisms concerns decentralization. White (1969) presents a case study of a private church-related agency which he labels a "dialectical organization". In this setting, administrative structure is nonhierarchical and the client's needs are not subordinated to those of the organization. It can be deduced that decisionmaking is not the exclusive domain of administrators, but instead takes place at many organizational levels. In a related essay, Kaufman (1969) discusses the administrative values which might lead an organization to decentralize. He contends that administrators who stress representativeness, rather than political neutrality or executive leadership, are most likely to favor decentralization.

Almost all of the literature on decentralization in government deals with Community Action Programs (CAPs), which were created by the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. According to Moynihan in Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding (1969), the Bureau of the Budget's original intent was to fight poverty through a coordinated community approach. Large federal programs were to be implemented nationwide, while small-scale programs could be originated and carried out at the local level. Moynihan contends

that both the original concept and the final legislation viewed community action as being only one component of the antipoverty program, rather than comprising the entire program. However, Congress eliminated a requirement for comprehensive planning from the act while mandating "broadly representative" programs. As a result, officials had a great deal of latitude in their choice of local participants and activities. Ultimately, CAPs operated with little intervention by federal agencies.

There seems little doubt that the decentralization which took place in the CAPs increased citizen access to government. Moynihan states that as the antipoverty program got underway, emphasis was placed on involving poor people in all aspects of the program. Similarly, Peterson (1970) studied the first two years of the program to determine what types of public representation were used. His survey of CAP participants in New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia found that the programs in all three cities included formal representation of poor people. Consequently, contacting decentralized programs does not appear to be a problem for citizens.

Another aspect of gaining access to government is the provision of accurate representation. Peterson's research indicates that the presence of citizen representatives in CAPs allows citizens' opinions to be expressed during agency decisionmaking. The study concludes that CAPs in Philadelphia and New York achieved substantive representation of the poor. However, the CAPs in the two cities provided such representation for different

reasons. Peterson asserts that in New York, conflict between the political establishment and the low-income community led to universal representation of the poor. This representativeness occurred despite the fact that council members were elected within the organization, rather than in the community. In contrast, CAP citizen members in Philadelphia were elected by the public at large. This method of selection may explain how substantive citizen representation was achieved.

Once citizens have obtained access to government, their next aim is to achieve results. In order to achieve goals, agency officials must take citizens' input into consideration when making decisions. Citizen input into decentralized government may be influenced by citizen representatives' ability to do their jobs. McClelland et al. (1975) explore this issue in their survey of community action agency staffs in Kentucky. Low-income staff members received power motivation training, in which they learned how power was related to community needs and how it could lead to effective action. The researchers concluded that 52% of the trainees exhibited either somewhat improved or greatly improved job performance. Only 1.8% of staff members were rated as performing worse after training. It appears that citizen representation increases when staff members understand their jobs, which in turn results in a greater ability to introduce citizen opinion into agency proceedings.

If decentralization increases citizens' input into government decisions, it also has the potential to increase citizens' ability to achieve concrete results. Miller and Rein (1969), in their analysis of the concept of maximum feasible participation, discuss some of the outcomes of the Economic Opportunity Act. They determine that citizen participation in the program resulted in provision of jobs and legitimization of the poverty program. These accomplishments appear to coincide with the goals of low-income participants in CAPs, indicating that decentralization can help citizens achieve desired results.

Another mechanism which may increase citizen participation is the use of intermediaries between government officials and the public. Intermediaries can serve in several different capacities, including public counsel (Paglin and Shor, 1977; Gormley, 1981), ombudsman (Hill, 1982), and elected officials (Jones, 1981; Greene, 1982). These mediators have the potential to increase both citizens' access to government and their ability to achieve goals.

There is little doubt that the use of intermediaries makes it easier for citizens to contact government agencies. Paglin and Shor's examination of citizen participation in regulatory agencies reveals that agencies have provided many different forms of assistance to the public, including public counsel and consumer assistance units. These intermediaries represent citizens within agencies and serve as channels of communication between officials and the public. Intermediaries can work outside agencies as

well. For example, Hill's study defines ombudsmen as independent government officials who receive citizen complaints against government and are empowered to investigate those complaints. Elected officials can also intercede on the public's behalf, as Jones shows in his examination of citizens and the service bureaucracy. Clearly, government intermediaries increase citizens' ability to contact government.

The literature also suggests that intermediaries improve citizens' ability to achieve results in dealing with government. Paglin and Shor conclude that public counsel and consumer assistance units within agencies seem effective in conveying public opinion to officials. Similarly, Gormley asserts that proxy advocates in regulatory agency proceedings possess technical expertise which is lacking in direct citizen participation. Such expertise could well enhance the value of public opinion in the eyes of public officials. Political parties also seem to increase achievement of citizens' goals. Jones' study of service delivery in Chicago's Department of Buildings found that the political party was the "most consistent" influence in fulfilling citizens' requests. Community groups appeared to have much less impact on the agency's actions. It can be inferred that these three types of government intermediaries achieve results which might not be obtainable through direct citizen participation.

In addition to instituting intermediaries or decentralization, government agencies sometimes use citizen advisory boards and committees as a mechanism to facilitate



citizen participation. Advisory boards can perform a variety of functions. Their activities include research (Crosby et al., 1986), resource allocation (Browne and Rehfuss, 1975; Steger, 1984), and program planning (Onibokun and Curry, 1976). If advisory boards are effective, they provide citizens with the opportunity to influence agency decisionmaking from within government.

Citizen contact with government agencies appears to increase greatly when advisory boards are instituted. Citizen participation is sometimes mandated, as is shown in Steger's 1984 study of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocational decisions in Milwaukee. In this case, the municipal government had built Neighborhood Advisory Councils (NACs) into the decision making process. Another setting for mandatory citizen participation is described by Paap and Hanson (1982) in their study of a Health Systems Council which carried out the work of a Health Systems Agency. Although the council included professional staff and service providers, the law required consumers to constitute a majority of members.

Even if citizen participation is not mandated, agencies may find it to their advantage to promote public involvement in government. In a survey of Georgia planning and development agencies, MacNair et al. (1983) found that the less powerful agencies were likely to encourage the activities of citizen participation units as a way of gaining public support. Such support, it was concluded, helped the agencies gain stability and

strength. Given this incentive, government officials might be motivated to increase citizens' ability to contact agencies.

Some research indicates that the use of advisory boards can encourage consideration of citizens' views in government decision-making. Rather than disregarding input from citizens, agency officials may give attention to public opinion in addition to other factors. An example is found in Crosby et al.'s 1986 study of citizens' panels in Minnesota, which examined agriculture's impact on water quality. The researchers concluded that the panels' final recommendations were taken into consideration in decision making. Another study discusses citizens' own evaluations of policymakers' consideration of public opinion. In Onibokun and Curry's 1976 examination of the citizen participation program of the 1972 Metro Seattle Transit Study, it was found that 73% of program participants felt that their ideas were used by officials. These studies suggest that citizen advisory committees can lead to use of citizen input in administrative decisionmaking. If officials take the public's views into consideration, then citizens have taken the first step toward actually achieving their goals.

Citizen advisory bodies can also achieve concrete results. Steger's 1984 study of CDBG allocation in Milwaukee found that neighborhood advisory committees influenced the city's final allocational decisions. In her conclusion, Steger speculates that neighborhood influence might have been eliminated if there had been no participatory structure built into the decisionmaking

process. Allocational decisions are also discussed in Browne and Rehfuss' case study of a citizen committee in Aurora, Illinois, which examined requests for revenue sharing funds. It was found that citizen participation led to changes in the distribution of funds, such as expansion of health and cultural services and deemphasis of capital improvements spending. In both these studies, then, there is evidence that citizen advisory boards can bring about achievement of citizens' goals.

As has been seen, government mechanisms for facilitating citizen participation can help the public gain access to agency decision making and sometimes achieve concrete results. However, the three mechanisms discussed above exhibit varying degrees of effectiveness. Decentralization, intermediaries, and advisory boards differ in their capacity to grant citizens access to government and to help them achieve goals. Some research indicates that these mechanisms often fail to bring about effective citizen participation. With such evidence, it is possible to construct an argument against the validity of the political parties model of political linkage.

A strong case can be made against the effectiveness of government decentralization in promoting citizen participation. As has been seen, decentralization can greatly increase citizens' access to government. However, research indicates that this mechanism often fails to help citizens achieve their goals. Both input into decisions and actual results are infrequently

produced. The research offers several explanations for this ineffectiveness.

Several authors contend that those who held power in government and in society at large used decentralized government programs to benefit themselves rather than the poor. As a result, low-income citizen participants had little input into the programs and little opportunity to bring about program goals. This phenomenon is discussed in Krause's 1968 study of the urban renewal programs which were sponsored by the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agencies, and the CAPs of the OEO. The author suggests that these bureaucracies used the ideology of citizen participation to the advantage of themselves and the middle class "establishment" of society.

The benefits which the middle class derived from decentralization appear to have been primarily monetary. Krause maintains that the middle class benefitted financially from urban renewal. Similarly, Moynihan (1969) states that the need to train minority field representatives in CAPs enabled middle-class professionals to make money as program executives and technical advisors. The financial goals of these individuals could conflict with low-income participants' antipoverty goals.

While the middle class as a whole benefitted financially from decentralization, government officials gained the additional benefit of power. Krause contends that politicians at the local level pressured state and federal officials to make community action agencies subject to local government supervision.

According to Krause, local officials hoped to curtail agency activity. Another example of local government control of CAPs is found in Peterson's 1970 study of the CAP representation process. Peterson found that in Chicago, public representatives were appointed by a mayoral appointee. It was concluded that there was almost no actual representation of low-income citizens. With local government officials wielding such power over CAPs, citizens would find it difficult both to contribute to decisionmaking and to achieve goals.

Social and governmental pressures were not the only reasons for the debilitation of citizen participation in decentralized programs. Besides these influences, internal factors impeded low-income citizens' ability to participate effectively. In the case of the CAP endeavor, one such factor can be found at the federal level. Moynihan points out that no blacks were involved in drafting the antipoverty program or CAP guidelines, despite the fact that urban blacks made up a large portion of the program's target population. This lack of representativeness at the federal level might render local implementation incapable of accommodating citizens' opinions or goals.

It can be shown that organizational factors at the local level did prevent effective citizen participation. One problem discussed in the research is conflict between agency members. Crenson (1974), in his study of neighborhood groups in Baltimore, found that organizations with high levels of internal conflict formulated few demands. Government-sponsored groups, including

two CAAs and two Model Cities councils, were all placed in the "low-demand" category. According to the author, intraorganizational conflict prevents a group from defining tasks and establishing an agenda. It can be inferred that this lack of direction led to a paucity of demands.

A possible explanation for conflict within government-sponsored organizations is found in Austin's 1972 study of CAA policy boards and community groups in twenty cities. At least one-third of the membership of each of the CAAs came from program target areas. These members were less likely to be white or well-educated than other members. Within the groups, target-area residents were found to have little influence in determining organizational structure or program strategies. CAA citizen participation was also considered limited in its impact on outside organizations.

Austin's findings suggest that racial and educational differences between group members can produce the type of conflict discussed in Crenson's study. Such conflict prevents the views of target-population participants from being considered in organizational decisionmaking, and also impedes participants from achieving results in their dealings with external organizations. This lack of influence indicates that citizen participation in decentralized government programs is not effective.

Citizen participation's failure to achieve its goals is illustrated in individual case studies of decentralized programs. Weissman's 1978 study of a Model Cities employment program in San

Fransisco found that the program placed only a limited number of target-area residents in jobs. This result is attributed in part to Model Cities' dependence on external organizations, including state and community agencies. Because of its dependence, Model Cities' activism decreased.

Similar conclusions are reached by Mithun (1975) in her study of a Buffalo urban renewal project funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). A federally mandated participant advisory committee clashed with local program officials and HUD over funding and program activities. When federal authorities reduced funds and shortened the program timetable, local participants no longer had the resources to achieve results. Demolition in the affected area was carried out, but the program ended without starting new projects or helping displaced residents. As in the Model Cities program, dependence on outside authorities produced ineffective citizen participation.

Decentralization's failure to achieve its goals indicates that it does not produce effective citizen participation. Although programs were decentralized so that affected citizens could contribute to planning and implementation, many local groups did not reach that objective. Citizen representatives never possessed the same degree of influence as program officials for various reasons, including citizens' lower social standing and officials' opportunity to benefit personally from their programs. Consequently, citizen input was often disregarded. Decentralized programs also frequently failed to achieve results, due to

conflict within local agencies and dependence on other levels of government. As a government mechanism for facilitating citizen participation, decentralization does not appear to work.

The use of intermediaries as a participatory mechanism may also fail at times to help citizens achieve results. In Greene's survey of New Jersey municipal administrators, it was disclosed that 75% of the respondents preferred dealing directly with citizens rather than using elected officials as intermediaries. This lack of receptivity could prevent intermediaries from producing effective citizen participation.

A case can also be made against the effectiveness of citizen advisory boards as mechanisms for participation. Like decentralized government, advisory boards and committees do succeed in increasing citizens' access to government. Much of the research, however, indicates that advisory bodies do not enable citizens to reach goals. Citizens often have little input into agency proceedings, thus preventing them from achieving results.

Public opinion may not be expressed during advisory board proceedings due to a lack of representativeness. As some studies conclude, citizens who participate on boards do not necessarily represent either their peers or the public at large. Redburn et al. (1980) provide an example of this situation in their survey of the general public, a citizens advisory board, and a general policy board in Youngstown, Ohio. In order to determine how well mandated citizen participation represents the public, the three groups were compared for background differences and attitudinal



differences. It was found that the advisory board was not consistently representative of the public. Instead, the board appeared to speak for special and individual interests.

Pierce (1979) presents similar findings in his examination of water policy preference concurrence among the public, group leaders, a citizen advisory committee, and water managers in Washington. It was determined that the advisory committee and the public disagreed on the degree of importance of water problems, the identification of problems, and the level of satisfaction with water policy. However, the two groups were found to agree on water policy preferences. While it can be inferred that the committee did represent the public to an extent, their disagreement on three of four issues suggests that the level of representativeness was less than could be expected. As a result, citizens were denied access to government.

Inaccurate representation is not the only factor which detracts from advisory boards' effectiveness as a means of citizen participation. Goal achievement can be prevented by a lack of citizen input in decisionmaking. In many cases, conflict between board members and professional staff prevents citizens from contributing to agency proceedings. Lauria (1986) raises this question in the context of a community-controlled implementation organization (CCIO) in Minneapolis.

The CCIO was made up of citizens whose goal was to improve their community's declining economy. While the citizens were responsible for planning and evaluation, a professional staff made

recommendations for the program's actual implementation. This arrangement led to conflict between the two factions, which Lauria concluded had four possible resolutions. One method of resolution required the CCIO to allow staff recommendations to become de facto decisions. A second alternative envisioned the staff manipulating the recalcitrant citizens into adopting the staff's ideas. The other resolutions involved choosing citizens and staff with similar backgrounds, which could make it difficult to retain both public representation and staff professionalism. As depicted in this study, the differences in citizens' and staffs' roles and ideas may produce conflict and a subsequent lack of citizen input.

Some research suggests that conflict between citizens and staff results from citizens' lack of professional expertise. Plumlee et al. (1985) explore this issue in their study of an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) water quality planning program in Texas, in which EPA staff, citizen committees, and local government officials participated. It was found that citizens lacked technical knowledge, were unaware of legal restrictions, and did not understand the length and complexity of agency planning. Citizens' lack of expertise led to conflict with EPA officials over program expectations and over federal involvement in local decisions. Both citizens and officials felt that citizen participation in the planning program was a failure. It can be inferred from these results that the citizen committees had limited input into the program.

Paap and Hanson (1982) describe another way in which lack of expertise can prevent citizens' views from being considered in agency proceedings. This case study examines a health systems council whose membership included service providers, staff, and consumers. During council meetings it was observed that service providers and staff discouraged consumers' criticisms by "complimenting", thus disarming citizens. The professionals also devalued citizens' opinions with "clarification", in which they corrected consumers' errors and highlighted their own expertise. In the end, citizens became passive while service providers and staff guided the council. It can be seen that the professional council members used their expertise to intimidate the consumers into subordination. The lack of citizen input did not result from direct conflict with the professionals, but rather from citizens' adoption of a passive role.

Even when citizen advisory boards' ideas are taken into consideration in agency proceedings, goal achievement does not always occur. The study by Crosby et al. of citizens panels' examination of water quality in Minnesota found that while the panels' recommendations were considered by officials, they were not actually adopted. Similarly, Onibokun and Curry's study of the Seattle transit system planning program concluded that although citizens' recommendations were used on an operational level, they had little influence at the policymaking level. Even if officials give serious consideration to advisory boards'

suggestions, citizen participation does not always achieve results.

In general, government mechanisms which are used to attain political linkage as it is described in the political parties model do not appear to be effective. While intermediaries, decentralization, and advisory boards do appear to increase citizens' access to government agencies, the latter two mechanisms frequently fail to help citizens achieve goals. Since goal achievement is the primary criterion for effectiveness in examining the political parties model, it must be concluded that this form of political linkage does is not an effective means of citizen participation. Three major explanations can be found for this ineffectiveness.

First, conflict between citizens and agency officials prevents goal achievement. As Crenson's 1974 study pointed out, groups with a high level of conflict tend to formulate few demands. Presumably, an undemanding organization will achieve few results. Conflict in government-sponsored participatory mechanisms has several causes, as was seen in the analysis of decentralized programs and advisory boards. The sources of conflict which have been discussed include racial and social differences, differences in citizens' and officials' duties, officials' use of programs for self-advancement, and citizens' lack of professional expertise.

A second reason for participatory mechanisms' lack of results is dependence on external organizations. The consequences of dependence were seen in local CAPs, where programs needed services and resources from other government agencies and private organizations in order to achieve goals. Moynihan (1969) contends that racial antagonism led to a backlash in the white community against the primarily black CAPs. If this assessment is accurate, then CAPs would have difficulty gaining moral or material support from external sources. Moynihan also suggests that local CAPs' dependence on federal officials' authority left them powerless when, faced with negative public opinion of CAPs, Washington officials decided to end local programs. It can be seen that because of their dependent position, decentralized programs found it difficult to achieve goals.

A third explanation for the ineffectiveness of government-sponsored citizen participation programs is the subordination of citizens to government officials. Subordination resembles dependence by preventing citizens from controlling the participatory mechanism. However, while dependence occurs at an organizational level, subordination takes place at an individual level. An example of subordination was found in the functioning of citizen advisory boards, in which staff members' contributions are considered more valuable than citizens' opinions. This assumption appears to contribute to advisory boards' failure to achieve citizen goals.

Although government mechanisms for citizen participation overall do not appear to be very effective in achieving goals, they do not always fail to get results. As was seen in the studies by Steger and by Browne and Rehfuss, citizen advisory boards can occasionally have an impact on government decision making. However, the most consistently successful participatory mechanism appears to be the use of intermediaries.

The studies discussed previously show that elected officials, ombudsmen, and proxies often achieve results when dealing with administrators. There appear to be two major factors which enable intermediaries to succeed. First, intermediaries hold official positions within government. This authority gives them knowledge of government processes, and thus may enable them to wield influence with agency administrators. Second, intermediaries often possess technical expertise in an agency's field. Such knowledge makes it possible to contribute usefully to agency decisionmaking. As can be seen, intermediaries succeed because they possess qualities which private citizens frequently lack.

The use of government-sponsored mechanisms to facilitate citizen participation does not appear to be generally effective. Although these mechanisms do greatly increase citizens' access to government, there is little evidence that they enhance citizens' ability to achieve results. Decentralization and citizen advisory boards appear to be only sporadically effective at best, while the use of intermediaries seems much better able to achieve goals. Taken as a whole, the methods of citizen participation

which fall into the political parties model of political linkage cannot be said to be effective.

### C. Pressure groups model

In the pressure groups model of political linkage, citizens who share opinions or goals join together to influence government decisionmaking. Because pressure groups are organized outside of government, any group is free to participate. However, as Luttbeg points out, not all groups weigh equally. Large groups of citizens may fail to make their views known, while small groups may be extremely vocal. For this reason, this analysis divides pressure groups into two categories. One category consists of business, professional, and other special interests. These groups represent small segments of the public, and have particularized goals which benefit a correspondingly small number of individuals. A second category includes citizens' and public interest groups, whose goals are meant to benefit the public at large or to protect individual rights. Because of their differences, the two types of pressure groups are examined separately. Access to public officials and goal achievement are given equal consideration in constructing arguments for and against effectiveness.

A convincing case can be built for pressure groups' effectiveness as a form of citizen participation. Much of the research indicates that these organizations can achieve both

access and results. However, it can be shown that special interest groups and public interest groups attain different levels of effectiveness. Institutional groups, which often represent corporate and professional interests, appear to wield considerable influence over government officials. In comparison to institutional pressure groups, the lobbying activities of citizen-based groups exhibit a limited degree of effectiveness.

Special interest pressure groups appear to have considerable success in gaining access to public officials. Schlozman (1984), in her examination of pressure groups in Washington, found that corporate interest groups made up 52% of the almost 7000 organized interests in the District. The fact that so many interests see fit to organize in the capitol indicates that pressure groups possess some degree of access to government. Since special interests constitute a majority of pressure groups, it can be inferred that their access to officials is greater than average.

It is often to the advantage of administrators to grant special interests access to government. In a nationwide survey, Abney and Lauth (1985) found that municipal department heads used interest groups as a means of influencing city councils. Pressure groups were seen as useful in persuading elected officials to pass favored proposals. On the federal level, Galnoor (1975) concluded that administrators granted interest groups access to official information in exchange for some equally valuable commodity. Both officials and pressure groups benefit from this type of arrangement.



Membership in pressure groups is motivated by the belief that access to government results in benefits. Browne (1976) explores this issue in his survey of municipal administrators in St. Louis, Missouri, who belonged to various interest groups representing local executives. It was found that group members rated lobbying as the most important benefit offered by their organizations. Interest group staffs also recognize the importance of lobbying, as another study by Browne (1977) reveals. In a survey of municipal interest group personnel, it is found that staff members stress the importance of maintaining good relations with government decisionmakers. For both pressure group members and staff, gaining and preserving access to public officials is an important aspect of the organization.

Interest groups also receive encouragement from elected officials to maintain ties with agencies. Aberbach and Rockman (1978), in a survey of 77 members of the House of Representatives, found that most congressmen viewed close relations between agencies and client groups as desirable. The researchers speculated that rather than restrict public access to agencies, Congress might institute changes which increase access. With support from elected officials, special interests would appear to have greater opportunities to establish relations with agency officials.

While it seems clear that special interests can achieve contact with agencies, it must also be asked whether pressure groups accurately represent their members' interests to

officials. If interest groups do not achieve representativeness, they cannot be said to provide the public with access to government. Salisbury (1984) raises this issue in his examination of interest representation in Washington, in which it is concluded that pressure groups tend to represent the interests of institutions rather than those of individual members. However, Franke and Dobson (1985) suggest that an institutional orientation does not necessarily detract from representation. Their survey of two retirees' interest groups found that the groups' leadership did not differ significantly from less active members in their policy positions. This consistency was attributed to the homogeneity of the groups' memberships, since not all members joined for policy reasons. As can be seen in this study, representation of institutional interests may also produce representation of individual interests.

In addition to having access to agencies, interest groups seem able to have input in government decisionmaking and to be capable of achieving goals. Bender and Moe (1985), in their construction of a model of bureaucratic politics, theorize that a bureaucracy's ability to achieve its own goals is held in check by constituents and legislatures. Confirmation of this idea is found in Galnoor's study, which determined that established lobbies play a formal role in government decisionmaking.

Both administrators and pressure group members recognize that interest groups exercise some influence over agencies. Abney and Lauth (1985) found evidence of this awareness in their survey of

municipal department heads. Although the officials in this study perceived neighborhood groups as wielding the most influence, the researchers concluded that business groups actually had more input into government than other types of interests. The findings of Barkenov and Rich (1977) concur with this view. Their study of businessmen's urban development committees revealed several ways in which business interests affect municipal government. Among their areas of influence are provision of expertise to officials, and participation in specific policy decisions. These findings can serve as evidence that special interests often achieve input into government.

The argument for the effectiveness of pressure groups also includes evidence that broadly-based public interest groups can gain access to government officials and achieve results. Rourke (1979) theorizes that public representation may be increased when pressure groups representing "benign" interests, such as civil rights, exercise power within agencies. Several empirical studies validate the claim that public interests can influence government decisionmaking. The research also shows that public pressure groups use a variety of methods to achieve access and input.

One factor which may limit public interest groups' access to government is the need for technical expertise. As Aron (1979) points out, citizens' groups need specialized knowledge in order to compete with industry representatives. Aron proposes "intervenor funding", in which government directly finances citizens' groups, as a solution. Public interest groups may also

employ confrontational tactics to make officials aware of their views. As Kloman (1974) suggests, citizen action groups may use litigation as a means of gaining access to agencies which regulate such technical areas as environmental protection and consumer protection. However, research indicates that public interest groups also deal with the problem of technical expertise internally. Some citizens' groups restructure their organizations in order to gain technical and professional credentials.

Citizens' groups often become bureaucratized in order to deal more efficiently with government agencies. Berry (1981) argues that public lobbies can be effective advocates if they institutionalize without being coopted by government officials. An example of bureaucratization can be found in a study of citizens' groups which was referred to earlier. In Ventriss and Pecorella's 1984 examination of two community organizations in East Los Angeles, it was found that one group transformed into a community development corporation in order to work more closely with public officials. The other group retained its grassroots orientation, which resulted in a more adversarial relationship with agencies. It was concluded that the bureaucratized group achieved greater access to government than did the community-oriented group.

A study of another Los Angeles community organization illustrates the tendency of citizens' groups to bureaucratize in order to gain technical knowledge. In Cooper's 1980 study, the Pico-Union Neighborhood Council met the need for expertise by

employing professional staff and gradually assuming the bureaucratic outlook of the agency with which it dealt. In this way, the interest group gained access to public officials and achieved input into government decisionmaking.

Attaining access to government officials can enable citizens' pressure groups to achieve the results they desire. Using their influence within agencies, public interest groups can sometimes reach their goals. Steger's 1984 study of local CDBG allocations in Milwaukee compared rules and procedures to political influence in order to determine which factor had more influence on funding decisions. Most of the proposals submitted to the city came from neighborhood-based nonprofit groups. It was found that rules and political influence both affected allocations, with group sponsorship of proposed projects being a determinant in agency recommendations for funding. It can be inferred from these results that public interest groups do wield some influence over administrative decisions.

Even if a citizens' pressure group lacks direct access to agencies, it may still be able to achieve results. This possibility is examined in Schuck's 1977 examination of such public interest groups as Public Citizen, Common Cause, and the Environmental Defense Fund for their effect on policy. Although these groups were often found to lack direct input, they appeared able to influence officials through the monitoring of agencies. Schuck suggests that officials' awareness of being watched, and their knowledge of pressure groups' ability to generate negative

publicity, can affect agency behavior. These tactics may enable public interest groups to achieve the results they want.

Another citizens' pressure group which appears to have achieved its goals is the National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO). As described by Piven and Cloward (1977), the NWRO began as a protest movement and gradually evolved into a negotiating and lobbying organization. The researchers indicate that results were obtained by establishing contacts within government, and by constructing formal arrangements with agencies for problem-solving. During its existence, the NWRO succeeded in solving individual grievances for welfare recipients and in solving collective grievances through the availability of grants. It seems, then, that this citizens' group succeeded in achieving its goals.

Although the NWRO's accomplishments can be used as evidence of pressure groups' ability to influence government, the history of the organization also illustrates how citizens' organizations sometimes fail to provide effective citizen participation. If a group does not represent its members' opinions accurately, it fails to provide citizens with access to government. In the case of the NWRO, several factors caused the group's character to change. These changes detracted from the organization's ability to represent its members.

Piven and Cloward found that members of the NWRO often left the organization once their individual problems had been resolved. A high turnover within the organization would seem to

increase the difficulty of accurately representing members' views. A second factor which might detract from the NWRO's representativeness is its decision to change its criteria for membership. While originally the group had admitted only recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children, it later allowed anyone below a certain income level to join. Piven and Cloward found that this diversification caused a power struggle within the organization. It is possible that internal conflict would prevent the group from pursuing its efforts to influence government. Finally, the need to deal with government officials changed the NWRO's primary function from protest to negotiation. This alteration could cause the organization to fail to express its members' views accurately. It can be argued that as the changes in the NWRO lessened the group's representativeness, its members' access to government was concurrently reduced.

A lack of representativeness can also be found in the pressure groups which were discussed earlier. In Cooper's 1980 study of a Los Angeles neighborhood organization, it was found that community input became less important than technical expertise. Consequently, a professional staff was hired and few community members continued to participate. Similar findings were reported by Ventriss and Pecorella in their comparison of two community groups in Los Angeles. One group incorporated in order to interact professionally with policymakers, which led to a decrease in community input. In contrast, the other organization chose to base its purposes and goals on community members' ideas.

Both these studies illustrate how member participation sometimes is deemphasized in order to deal more efficiently with public officials. As a result of pressure groups' professionalization, citizens' ability to influence the group decreases. This lack of citizen input reduces pressure groups' effectiveness in giving citizens access to government.

The research also indicates that citizens' pressure groups are sometimes ineffective in achieving results. Even when public interest organizations have access to government, they may fail to influence agency officials. Two studies cited earlier provide examples of groups which have limited influence on government decisionmaking.

In Pierce's 1979 examination of water policy in Washington state, group leaders and water policy managers were found to have a low level of agreement on policy preferences. Both the general public and a citizens' advisory committee concurred more closely with managers' views than did the group leaders. Although these results could indicate a lack of representativeness on the part of group leaders, they also indicate that the groups in question had little impact on agency officials.

Jones' 1981 study of service delivery in Chicago's Department of Buildings reported similar findings. Political parties were determined to be the most consistently influential link between citizens and the agency, while community-based groups wielded much less influence. Again, citizens' pressure groups appear to have limited ability to achieve their goals.



A possible explanation for pressure groups' lack of results can be found in Galnoor's 1975 examination of the exchange of information between pressure groups and government. Galnoor contends that this type of transaction takes place as long as it benefits both public officials and interest groups. With some types of groups, information sharing is not mutually beneficial and consequently does not take place. Groups which Galnoor designates as "non-established lobbies" do not exchange information with government either because they lack the knowledge to exchange, or because they choose not to engage in information sharing.

Both of the above factors may explain why citizens' groups sometimes exert little influence over agency officials. As has been seen in other studies, citizens' organizations often lack the technical knowledge which might make their input more valuable to agencies. In addition, Galnoor suggests that pressure groups which represent the general public interest, rather than a particular clientele, may wish to avoid a symbiotic relationship with government officials. It may be deduced that a public interest group would be compromised by such an association. Whether citizens' pressure groups choose not to exchange information with agency officials, or simply do not possess the resources needed for an exchange, the absence of mutual benefit could account for citizens' lack of influence in government.

A review of the arguments for and against the effectiveness of pressure groups leads to the conclusion that this form of political linkage is an effective mode of citizen participation. While special interest groups and public interest groups exhibit different levels of effectiveness, the research appears to confirm the validity of the pressure groups model overall. There are several possible explanations for pressure groups' success in facilitating citizen participation.

One reason that pressure groups are able to influence public officials is that agencies often benefit from their association with organized interests. It can be concluded from a summary of the research that these benefits take two major forms. In one form, agency officials may use pressure groups as a means of influencing elected officials to make decisions which favor both the agency and the interest group. Agencies may also benefit in a second way when pressure groups provide them with information. When organized interests supply technical expertise to agencies, officials' decisionmaking capabilities appear to be enhanced. Public officials may reciprocate by furnishing interest groups with information, which results in an arrangement that benefits both parties. The fact that agencies and pressure groups profit mutually from this exchange enables pressure groups to gain access to government and to achieve results.

A second reason for pressure groups' success in influencing government can be found in their ability to publicize agencies' activities. This method of influence appears to be employed

mainly when pressure groups and agencies cannot establish a mutually beneficial alliance. If a pressure group cannot provide an agency with information or political support, or does not profit from a close association with government officials, then it may adopt a confrontational approach toward the agency. The pressure group may not exercise direct influence, but its awareness of agency activities and capacity for generating publicity may affect public officials' decisionmaking. Although the pressure group does not gain access to the agency, it is effective in achieving results.

A third explanation for pressure groups' effectiveness involves accurate representation of members' viewpoints. According to Luttbeg's definition, pressure groups are made up of individuals who have a shared opinion of government policy. Pressure groups should therefore possess an inherently high degree of representativeness. However, even if individuals join an interest group for other than policy reasons, the group may still represent those members accurately. As was seen in Franke and Dobson's study, the homogeneous nature of interest groups' membership tends to promote agreement on policy issues. It would appear, then, that pressure groups bring about effective participation by accurately reflecting citizens' opinions.

While pressure groups do appear to be generally successful in gaining access to agencies and achieving goals, there are instances when organized interests fail to produce effective citizen participation. One explanation for lack of effectiveness,

as suggested earlier, is the need to provide agencies with useful resources and information. Pressure groups which have nothing to offer public officials may experience difficulty in gaining access to government. As both Schuck and Galnoor indicate, interest groups may achieve results without gaining access if they take an adversarial position toward agencies. However, pressure groups who wish to cooperate with government appear to need technical expertise in order to obtain access to officials.

As the research shows, special interest groups generally possess specialized knowledge which agency officials can use in decisionmaking. The particularistic nature of special interests' memberships and goals, which stems from their institutional orientation, causes these groups to develop expertise in specific areas. In contrast, public interest groups frequently lack this narrow focus. These citizen-based pressure groups tend to represent large segments of the public, and consequently often have broad goals and limited amounts of technical knowledge. As a result, citizen-oriented groups may not have adequate resources to influence government decisionmaking.

It has been shown that citizens' groups sometimes acquire professional staff and technical expertise in order to interact more effectively with public officials. However, while professionalization may increase a group's ability to achieve results, it may also decrease citizens' access to government. Research by Cooper and by Ventriss and Pecorella indicates that the original members of citizens' groups often leave the

organization as professional staff is hired and activities become more technical. Without the input of its constituency, a citizens' group seems likely to become less representative. This lack of representativeness renders pressure groups ineffective in providing citizens with access to government. While the pressure group itself may wield influence over government officials, its activities and goals may deviate from those envisioned by its original membership.

Pressure groups clearly are not a perfect form of citizen participation. Some small interest groups may wield great influence over public officials, while broadly-based organizations may have little effect on government decisionmaking. However, the use of pressure groups generally seems effective as a method of political linkage. Citizens can gain access to agency officials through membership in an interest group, and can often go on to achieve results by exercising influence over government decision-making. Although pressure groups sometimes fail to produce access or results, they generally exhibit effectiveness as a means of citizen participation.

## VI. Conclusions

Citizen participation in nonelective government takes several different forms in its effort to influence administrative decision-making. Using Luttbeg's three coercive models of political

linkage as a framework, the most important characteristics of each type of citizen participation have been delineated. These distinguishing attributes help to account for the different levels of effectiveness found among the rational-activist, political parties, and pressure groups models. An overview of the various types of participation reveals four major factors which can contribute to, or detract from, effectiveness.

One determinant of effectiveness is the individual citizen's capacity for participation. Involvement in government entails time and effort (Kafoglis, 1970). As Steinman (1976) points out, socially disadvantaged people tend to lack these resources. Likewise, Steinberger (1984) has shown that as social status increases, citizens are more likely to participate in ways that require a greater degree of effort. The benefits of participation must outweigh the costs in order for citizens to perceive involvement as worthwhile (Kafoglis, 1970; Brudney, 1985).

It can be deduced that individual capacity for participation affects a group's collective ability to influence government. In his study of neighborhood political development, Cohen (1979) shows how individual interests develop into collective interests as citizen participation evolves from church and school group membership to a network of community-oriented organizations. Participation for individual benefits may eventually lead to a willingness to participate on behalf of groups and organizations.

A second factor which influences the effectiveness of participation is the possession of professional and technical expertise. As was seen in the research, such expertise may provide citizens with a means of establishing a relationship with government. If citizens can offer valuable information to public officials, it can contribute to the effectiveness of participation (Berry, 1981).

The amount of influence which citizens derive from technical knowledge may depend on administrators' degree of need for expertise. Decisionmakers who need technical advice may be more influenced by citizen participation than are administrators in less complex fields (Aberbach and Rockman, 1978). On the other hand, officials who do not work in technical areas may be receptive to citizens who do not possess special skills. Social service administrators, for example, have been found to be more favorable to citizen participation than are other agency heads (Aberbach and Rockman, 1978). In either case, technical expertise appears to an important element in determining the effectiveness of citizen participation.

A third factor which influences citizen participation's effectiveness is the degree of representativeness in citizens' groups and participatory mechanisms. As demonstrated in the literature (Salisbury, 1984; Steger, 1984; Franke and Dobson, 1985), representatives must reflect accurately the views of their constituents in order for citizen participation to be effective. Some of the elements of representativeness which have been

discussed include the homogeneity of a group, the degree of policy accordance between representatives and other citizens, and the activities and goals established within a group or mechanism.

As has been seen, citizen representatives and groups who resemble their constituents demographically and politically are likely to provide accurate representation. A lack of similarity, conversely, would detract from representativeness. In addition, it has been demonstrated that the activities and goals which are used to influence government may increase or decrease the quality of representation. Individuals and groups who speak on behalf of other citizens can influence the effectiveness of participation through the accuracy of their representation.

Finally, a fourth factor which helps determine the effectiveness of citizen participation can be found in the ability of agency officials to benefit from citizen input. As has been shown, citizen participation can help administrators in several ways. Agency officials may be able to use citizens as a source of information for decisionmaking (Galnoor, 1975), or as a means of influencing elected officials (Barkenov and Rich, 1977). Administrators can also bestow legitimacy to their decisions by involving the public in the planning process (Irland, 1975). On the other hand, officials who do not need these benefits to operate their programs may lack an incentive to allow citizen input. The extent to which administrators profit from citizen participation appears to be an important element in deciding participation's effectiveness.



To summarize the reasons for citizen participation's effectiveness or ineffectiveness, the four factors outlined above can be applied to the three models of political linkage. The possession of these qualities appears to contribute to the effectiveness of any form of citizen participation. However, the the three models differ considerably in the degree to which they exhibit these attributes.

The rational-activist model can be said to represent an ineffective form of participation because it generally lacks three of the four factors which enable citizens to influence government. Rational-activist participation provides highly accurate representation, since the individual citizen expresses his opinion directly to public officials. However, the other three contributing factors are usually absent. The rational-activist form of participation lacks effectiveness due to its shortage of individual participatory capacity, professional expertise, and benefits to public officials.

The individual citizen's capacity for participation is limited by the amount of time and effort required to influence government. For individuals, the benefits of participation may be disproportionately small when compared to the costs. This imbalance may explain why rational-activist participation often takes place on a city or local level (Mladenka, 1977; Vedlitz et al., 1980). Larger goals require more capacity for participation than the individual citizen possesses.

Similarly, rational-activist participation often lacks technical expertise. An individual citizen is unlikely to have detailed knowledge of the area in which he is attempting to influence government. Without such knowledge, it is improbable that a citizen can contribute meaningfully to agency decision-making.

A lack of expertise is one way in which rational-activist participation fails to offer benefits to officials. Unless administrators can profit from citizen participation in some way, they are likely to reject citizen input. Individual citizens generally cannot offer officials information or political power. The only benefit which administrators might derive from rational-activist participation is public approval of their programs. Since such approval would take place on a relatively small scale, it might not provide enough incentive for officials to allow citizen influence in government. As can be seen, the rational-activist model has few of the attributes of effective citizen participation.

The political parties model has been shown to include both effective and ineffective methods of citizen participation. It was concluded that for the most part, the model did not represent an effective means of participation. While the methods discussed in the research did benefit public officials, the other attributes of effective participation appeared to be lacking.

Citizen participation in the political parties model appeared to be deficient in citizens' capacity for participation and technical expertise. As was shown in the research, participation in this model often took the form of service on an advisory board or employment in a decentralized program. It is clear that both of these types of participation entail a great deal of time and effort on the part of citizens. It can be inferred that many citizens would be deterred from participation by the investment required. For those citizens who did become involved in decentralization and advisory boards, the problem of expertise detracted from their ability to influence government decision-making. The research indicated that citizens' lack of professional knowledge often prevented them from contributing to agency proceedings.

The political parties model does include one form of participation which provides both capacity and expertise. As was seen in the research, the use of intermediaries can compensate for private citizens' lack of these two factors. Elected officials, ombudsmen, and proxies can use their professional time and knowledge to represent citizens' interests. As a result, this mechanism offers an effective method of participation.

The political parties model appears to possess a fair degree of representativeness and a great deal of opportunity for public officials to profit from citizen participation. Since citizens are directly involved in decentralization and advisory boards, these mechanisms seem to offer accurate representation. As the

research suggested, however, citizen representatives may represent particular interests rather than the public at large. This circumstance could lessen representativeness. Regardless of the quality of representation, it appears that public officials can derive benefits from these methods of participation.

Decentralization provided opportunities to create new government positions, while advisory boards give agency administrators a means of obtaining official public approval of their programs. Although citizens' lack of participatory capacity and expertise make the political parties model a generally ineffective means of participation, the degree of representation and the benefits to administrators can occasionally produce effectiveness.

The pressure groups model of political linkage exhibits the attributes of successful citizen participation more consistently than either the rational-activist model or the political parties model. Although differences between special interests and public interests can be found, the model as a whole represents an effective form of citizen participation. All four of the factors which contribute to effectiveness are present in pressure groups.

Pressure groups resolve the problem of the individual citizen's capacity for participation by employing professional staffs. As the research showed (Browne, 1977), pressure group members consider lobbying one of the most important benefits of belonging to an organized interest. The use of professional lobbyists enables citizens to work to influence government without sacrificing excessive amounts of their personal resources.

Pressure groups also tend to have a substantial supply of technical expertise. Since many special interests organize for business or professional reasons, they are likely to possess detailed knowledge of a particular field. Such expertise makes it possible to participate meaningfully in agency decisionmaking. On the other hand, public interest groups are less likely than special interests to have professional expertise. This deficiency could detract from the overall effectiveness of pressure groups.

A high degree of representativeness is also characteristic of pressure groups. Because they are so narrowly focused, special interests are likely to express their members' views accurately. Conversely, the broad focus of citizens' groups enables them to represent the public at large. Accurate representation of membership appears to be inherent in pressure groups' functioning.

Finally, pressure groups can offer administrators substantial benefits. Special interests can provide agency officials with technical information which is needed for decisionmaking. In addition, pressure group support for an agency can provide administrators with influence over elected officials. It is clear that these potential benefits provide administrators with a strong incentive to work with pressure groups.

As has been seen, the effectiveness of citizen participation relies on the ability to gain access to agencies and to achieve results. Each of the models of political linkage can be used to illustrate how this capability is derived from the four factors outlined above. For example, rational-activist participation is

often ineffective because citizens tend to lack the capacity and expertise needed to gain access to agencies. Moreover, rational-activist participation offers few benefits to administrators. Lack of participatory capacity and expertise also detracts from the effectiveness of the political parties methods of participation, since these deficiencies prevent citizens from achieving results in spite of their access to government. As has been observed, the use of intermediaries is the most effective of the political parties methods because it provides professional capacity and expertise. Finally, the pressure groups model attains a relatively high degree of effectiveness because its participants have the capacity and expertise needed to gain access to government and achieve results. In addition, pressure groups provide citizens with accurate representation and offer public officials the benefits of information and political power. It can be seen that the possession of these four attributes contributes to effective citizen participation.

An understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of citizen participation suggests ways in which effectiveness might be increased. In the rational-activist model, compensation for individual citizens' lack of resources might take the form of an agency survey of public opinion (Milbrath, 1981). Similarly, the lack of citizen expertise in the political parties model might be solved by providing both professional and nonprofessional participants with special instruction in working together (Brown, 1977). While pressure groups generally exhibit effectiveness,

public interest groups' ability to influence government might be increased by government funding of citizens' organizations (Aron, 1979). These solutions may not be feasible or successful in every situation, but they offer citizens' activities the possibility of acquiring the characteristics of effective participation.

The effectiveness of citizen participation appears to rely largely on the willingness of agency administrators to accommodate participation. The suggestions offered above for increasing effectiveness all involve the use of government resources to increase citizens' ability to participate. It can also be concluded from the research that citizens are most likely to achieve access and results when public officials can somehow benefit from citizen participation. In the most consistently effective forms of participation, such as pressure groups and the use of intermediaries, citizens possess adequate resources for participation and officials can profit from citizen involvement. If these factors are absent, as they often are in the rational-activist and political parties models, participation is less likely to be effective. It can be concluded that many forms of citizen participation do not provide citizens with the resources needed for effectiveness. With the exception of pressure groups, Luttbeg's three models of political linkage do not consistently represent effective methods of citizen participation in nonelective government.

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